

Senator Joe Manchin

The JOBS SCORE Act

For far too long, Washington hasn't done enough to make jobs this country's No. 1 priority. Our nation has endured an unacceptably high unemployment rate for the past three years, leaving too many hardworking Americans without jobs to support themselves or their families.

The national unemployment rate stands at an unacceptable 8.8 percent, but when we count the underemployed (those who would like to be part of the full-time labor force, but can only find part-time work or none at all), the rate climbs to a shocking 15.7 percent.

Senator Manchin firmly believes that the first thing lawmakers should consider in a piece of legislation is its impact on jobs – whether the impact is positive, neutral or negative.

Right now, the government requires that bills be “scored” for how much money they will cost taxpayers. Senator Manchin's commonsense legislation would simply require the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) to determine the number of jobs that would be created, protected, or lost should a specific piece of legislation become law -- so the public can be assured that lawmakers are making jobs their top priority.

This bill will make debates about jobs more transparent and more concrete, giving lawmakers a solid basis of information for decision-making.

Prioritizing Jobs

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) is the independent, non-partisan government organization that is currently tasked with providing cost estimates for legislation that is proposed to Congress. The CBO estimates are able to project the spending or revenue effects of legislative proposals in comparison with current law. This “score” helps Members of Congress determine whether the costs or savings associated with a particular bill are justified.

What this “score” does not show, however, is the effect the legislation will have – either positive or negative – on jobs. This is a critical missing component in Congress' decision-making process.

By making Members of Congress aware of the job-related effects of particular pieces of legislation, this bill will push Congress to keep their focus where it belongs when crafting policy – on creating and protecting American jobs.